



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 30, 2005

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
HERBERT HADAD, MEGAN GAFFNEY  
HEATHER TASKER, BRIDGET KELLY  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
(212) 637-2600

DEA  
GARRISON COURTNEY  
(202) 307-2402

**UNITED STATES ANNOUNCES DISMANTLING  
OF INTERNATIONAL HEROIN-TRAFFICKING RING**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent in Charge of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") in New York, announced today that eight defendants have been charged in Manhattan federal court with participating in an international heroin-trafficking ring responsible for smuggling over \$1 million worth of heroin into the United States, including the New York City area. Seven of the defendants charged in Manhattan were arrested today in Colombia, and are in custody there awaiting extradition.

The takedown announced today in Manhattan is a part of "Operation High Step," an eighteen month-long international law enforcement operation led by the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force (the "Strike Force"), a Federal task force comprised of agents and officers of the DEA, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the United States Marshals Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the New York State Police, and the New York City Police Department. The charges and today's arrests were the result of close coordination among the Strike Force, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, and Colombian authorities, as well as several other United States Attorney's Offices nationwide. The investigation, which involved Court-authorized wiretaps in the U.S. and Colombia, culminated in 46 arrests worldwide.

The Indictment unsealed today charges GONZALO SALAZAR OLIVEROS, a/k/a "Horacio," a/k/a "Viejo," FERNANDO BEDOYA LOZANO,

a/k/a "Don F," a/k/a "Gordo," MARITZA CARDENAS DIAZ, a/k/a "La Negra," a/k/a "La India," a/k/a "Jenny," DIEGO FERNANDO OROZCO MENDEZ, a/k/a "El Doctor," JOSE SMITH BURBANO, a/k/a "Pajaro," NANCY DURANGO, a/k/a "La Tia," FERNANDO DELGADO, a/k/a "Casper," a/k/a "Casita," and JAIME ALBERTO PARRA MUÑOZ, a/k/a "Video," (collectively the "Defendants") with engaging in a conspiracy to import and distribute kilogram-quantities of heroin into the United States from April 2005 to September 2005. SALAZAR OLIVEROS and his organization utilized couriers to transport heroin from Colombia into the United States aboard commercial airliners. Approximately 15 kilograms of heroin, with a wholesale value of over \$1 million, were seized in Colombia and the U.S. as a result of the Strike Force's investigation.

The seven Southern District defendants arrested in Colombia will remain in Colombian custody awaiting extradition to the United States. CARLOS HUMBERTO LOZANO, a local heroin distributor working for the organization who was arrested yesterday, is charged by criminal complaint and will be presented in Manhattan federal court, 500 Pearl Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, later this afternoon.

If convicted, each defendant faces a maximum sentence of lifetime imprisonment, and a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of ten years.

Mr. GARCIA praised the collective efforts of the Strike Force and its member agencies, and thanked Colombian authorities for their assistance in the investigation. Mr. GARCIA also thanked the United States Attorney's Offices in Chicago, Brooklyn and Boston for their roles in the investigation.

This case is being prosecuted by the International Narcotics Trafficking Unit of the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys VIRGINIA CHAVEZ and GLEN G. MCGORTY are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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